

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK  
2016 UN DAY HUMANITARIAN AWARDS DINNER

New York, 26 October 2016

I am delighted to send greetings to the United Nations Association of New York. The United Nations is grateful for your engagement and commitment.

Last year, the United Nations celebrated its seventieth anniversary with landmark steps to advance sustainable development and combat climate change. In September, all 193 Member States of the United Nations agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty and build a life of dignity for all on a healthy planet. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are transformative and universal, and they will demand action from all partners, including young people. In December, governments came together to adopt the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This historic agreement will enter into force on 4 November this year, after governments ratified it in record time. In May of this year, I convened the first ever World Humanitarian Summit, bringing Member States, international organizations, civil society, private sector and others together to commit to reducing the unprecedented levels of humanitarian need and suffering in the world today.

Taken together, these agreements and events, as well as ongoing efforts to strengthen peace operations and sustain peace, open up new horizons for common progress. They are essential if we are to confront the conflicts, extremism, exploitation, forced displacement, bigotry and despair that characterize too much of today's global landscape.

Every day, the United Nations strives to make a difference: delivering food; providing clean water and healthcare; promoting equal rights; advancing the empowerment of women and girls; bringing enemies together around a peace table; helping countries build effective institutions and move towards prosperity and stability.

I pay special tribute to this evening's honourees: my Special Envoy for Road Safety, Jean Todt, and UNDP Goodwill Ambassador Michelle Yeoh.

More than a million people are killed on the roads each year, and 50 million are injured. As we continue to mark the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety, I thank Mr. Todt for his political commitment and engagement.

Ms. Yeoh is bringing her formidable star power and energy to support the Sustainable Development Goals. She recently drew attention to the world's diminishing wildlife by announcing the names of our first Animal Ambassadors: the panda cubs, Qiqi and Diandian.

I deeply appreciate the support of the United Nations Association of New York over the past ten years—for myself personally, and for the whole United Nations system. I am confident that you will continue your work with my successor as we strive to build peace, sustainable development and human rights around the world.

Handwritten signature of Ban Ki-moon in black ink.  
Ban Ki-moon

## United Nations Association of New York

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October 26, 2016

Distinguished Honorees, Guests and Friends,

In April of 2015, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Jean Todt of France as his Special Envoy for Road Safety. Mr. Todt also serves as President and CEO of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the governing body of Formula One Auto Racing. He is perhaps best known by the general public for his role as the director who led the Ferrari Formula One team through its most successful period, and went on to become its Chief Executive Officer. Under Mr. Todt's leadership, the United Nations has played a critical role in raising global awareness of a problem of immense magnitude: more than 1.3 million people killed, and more than 50 million injured, on the world's roads every year. The cost is not only colossal in human terms, with road accidents being the leading cause of death globally for young people aged 15 to 29, but also in terms of the economic loss to societies.

During Mr. Todt's tenure at the helm of the FIA, he has successfully focused attention on road safety, demonstrating that the world of auto racing is, perhaps paradoxically, the perfect breeding ground for a world leader in road safety. Through Mr. Todt's tireless efforts, he has successfully brought the issue of road safety to the forefront of the development agenda of world leaders.

Michelle Yeoh, Mr. Todt's partner, has also been an outspoken advocate for road safety and a supporter of the cause for many years. Ms. Yeoh, an acclaimed actress and director, has served as a Global Ambassador for the Make Roads Safe campaign, and has supported many other philanthropic efforts. In March of 2015, Ms. Yeoh was appointed as a Goodwill Ambassador by the United Nations Development Programme, where she has used her influence as an actress and an advocate to shine a spotlight on global development issues. For example, Ms. Yeoh has successfully raised awareness of and mobilized support for the recently-launched Sustainable Development Goals.

This evening we gather to celebrate the achievements of Mr. Todt and Ms. Yeoh, and the important contributions that each has made to the United Nations.

Finally, these remarks would not be complete without thanking Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and Mrs. Ban. As we bid them farewell, we wish to express our profound gratitude for the tremendous encouragement and support UNA-NY has received from the United Nations throughout the Secretary-General's two terms in office.

We thank you for joining us this evening to celebrate the worthy achievements of our 2016 honorees, and for continuing to support UNA-NY.

Sincerely,



Abid Qureshi  
President